

## **Lori Nierzwick—This I Believe**

I take my lunch to school every day. It is your typical sandwich, fruit, dessert, and the likes. Well...recently, I have been on what some may call a grape-kick...with grapes being my fruit of choice. One night last week, we tragically ran out, so my dad said he would bring some home. Not being the normal "grape-picker-outer" of the family, he happened to buy a package of grapes that still contained seeds. The next day, I had quite a surprise at lunch. Let me warn you now-grape seeds do NOT taste good. However, if it hadn't been for this incident, I wouldn't have realized a philosophy that applies to us all. My new belief: we are all like grapes. To begin, grapes have the same life cycle as we do. Starting out little and cute, then growing to become strong, firm and healthy. Following that, some may get a tad sour, and then they slowly begin to wrinkle and crease. As humans, grapes go through these stages with a protective outer layer, or skin, that shields, defends, and adapts as we grow. Now, the main reason I feel grapes are so much like us is that they are illusionists. We all have our imperfections, our "bitter" qualities, as a grape has its bitter seeds. Both of us try our best to hide these. We put on that sweet outer cover and pretend that awful taste isn't inside. What we both fail to realize, however, is that these very things we are hiding are what makes us grow. Removing these seeds or pretending they aren't there teaches us absolutely nothing. It depreciates the fact that no one is perfect. If they were, there would never be failure...therefore how could improvements or innovative ideas ever come about? Sometimes we need that subtle reminder, that accidental bitter taste, in order to remember all of us are growing. Together.